

Message Text

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TAGS: SENV, EGEN, UR, UK

SUBJECT: UK/USSR JOINT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
COMMITTEE MEETING

SUMMARY: JOINT COMMITTEE OF UK AND USSR FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION HELD ITS FIRST MEETING IN LONDON FROM NOVEMBER 29 - DECEMBER 3 UNDER JOINT CHAIRMANSHIP OF A. G. FAIRCLOUGH, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL UNIT OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, AND W. A. IZRAEL, HEAD OF THE MAIN ADMINISTRATION OF THE HYDROMETEROROLOGICAL SERVICE ATTACHED TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE USSR. THOUGH SOVIETDEL HOPED CONCLUDE MORE AMBITIOUS PROGRAM THAN UK WAS READY TO CONSIDER, TALKS WERE EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND LAID GROUNDWORK FOR ACTIVE YEAR OF TECHNICAL EXCHANGES IN 1975. END SUMMARY

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1. WE DISCUSSED THE FIRST MEETING OF THE USSR

COMMITTEE FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WITH MARGARET ROTHWELL, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT, FCO. SHE SAID THAT WHILE TALKS WERE VERY AMIABLE, THERE WAS A SLIGHT DIFFERENCE OF APPROACH BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. THE UK DELEGATION HAD BEEN PURPOSEFULLY KEPT AT THE WORKING LEVEL AND ENTERED THE MEETING WITH TWO MAIN OBJECTIVES.

A) TO LEARN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT HOW THE SOVIETS ORGANIZE THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES, AND B) TO DEVELOP A CLEAR, COHERENT WORK PROGRAM FOR PRESENTATION TO RESEARCH COUNCILS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES. THE HIGH-POWERED SOVIET DELEGATION ARRIVED, HOWEVER, WITH A MUCH MORE AMBITIOUS PLAN. THEY WERE LOOKING FOR FIRM PROJECT COMMITMENTS, WHICH ON THE WHOLE THE BRITISH WERE NOT PREPARED TO MAKE. THIS LED IN THE END TO A MORE LEGALISTIC MEMORANDUM COVERING THE MEETING THAN THE BRITISH WOULD HAVE LIKED. ROTHWELL DOES FEEL THAT THE SOVIETS LEFT THE MEETINGS WITH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESOURCE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY RESTRAINTS ON HMG IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD.

2. ROTHWELL STATED THAT MUCH TIME WAS SPENT IN EXPLAINING TO THE SOVIETS (ESPECIALLY KOUVSHINNIKOV, WHO IS INVOLVED WITH THE US/USSR AGREEMENT) THAT INCLUSION OF A PARTICULAR ITEM IN THE MEMORANDUM DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT HMG HAS ACCEPTED IT. SHE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THE DEPARTMENT'S EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN IN DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS ON THIS POINT. ALSO, KOUVSHINNIKOV PUSHED FOR ADOPTION OF WHAT HE CALLED THE "AMERICAN PLAN" WHEREBY THE RECEIVING COUNTRY PAYS PER DIEM DURING VISITS RELATED TO THE AGREEMENT. PRESENTLY THE UK/USSR AGREEMENT CALLS FOR THE SENDING COUNTRY TO BEAR THE COSTS. SHE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO LEARN THE US POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT.

3. AMONG THE PROJECTS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM THE SOVIETS WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE ELABORATION OF SCIENTIFIC BASES FOR MONITORING THE QUALITY OF SURFACE WATER BY HYDROBIOLOGICAL INDICES, RECLAMATION AND PREVENTION OF DETERIORATION OF LAND, AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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URBANIZATION AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT.

4. TEXT OF MEMORANDUM WILL BE POUCHED DECEMBER 17.

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